

OUR BIG SHOPS AT PANAMA

Jamaica Negroes, Under American Foremen, Repair Machinery Worth Millions.

YOUNG ENGINEERS' SCHOOL

Mechanical Engineer Strom Talks With Mr. Carpenter About the Work.

By Frank G. Carpenter.

BAS MATACHIN, PANAMA, April 27.—Take a look at the biggest machine shop on the Isthmus of Panama. It is situated half way between the Atlantic and the Pacific. In the mountains, high up from the sea. It covers acres and under its galvanized iron roof a network of wheels is humming away at the rate of a hundred revolutions a minute. The floor is covered with moving machinery and gangs of Americans and natives are at work. Here they are grinding old French locomotive wheels into new ones; there they are drilling holes through iron plates and bars, and farther on steel planers are shaving off iron as though it were wood. Traveling cranes moved from the roof, pick up steam engines and other enormous weights and carry them from one part of the shop to the other, while in the foundries, adjoining the boiling metal bubbles and seethes as it is carried from the furnaces by Jamaican and Colombian laborers, who are making castings of more than a ton in weight. Outside the shop the ground is covered with acres of car wheels, iron dredge buckets and steel rails. The warehouses nearby contain more than a million dollars' worth of pumps, dredges and machine tools, and the whole is like one of the great industrial institutions of Pittsburgh or Chicago, rather than a repair shop in the heart of the backwoods of the Isthmus of Panama.

Bas Matachin is the chief shop for the

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technic Institute of Stockholm, one of the best engineering schools of the world. After his graduation there he came to the United States and learned the English language while acting as engineer for the Chesapeake and Ohio and Southwestern Railway. When that road was merged in the Illinois Central he went with it, and soon became the mechanical engineer in chief of that system, with its enormous shops and 5,000 or 6,000 miles of track.

Found in the Jungles.

Said Mr. Strom: "We found these shops in the jungles. We did not know they existed when I came here last June, and it was only

also been doing a great deal of fitting up of boilers, engines, concrete mixers and other things for the waterworks and sewer departments. We are repairing cranes, excavators, drills, dredges and all sorts of things."

French Machines vs. American.

"What is the character of the French machinery, Mr. Strom?" I asked.

"It is excellent of its kind, but much of it is now obsolete, having been supplanted by better inventions and by American improvements. When it was put here twenty years ago it was absolutely modern, and the finest that could be purchased. As it is now, much of it is good, and when it is sprinkled with

engineering corps?" "We have a large number of college graduates who are starting out to make a place for themselves. We have men from Cornell, Purdue, Ann Arbor, the Illinois State University, and the Boston School of Technology. They are mechanical engineers getting their first practical experience, and as a rule they are doing well."

"Is this a good place for such men?" "Yes. The Isthmus now offers unlimited opportunities for the training of young engineers. We have all sorts of mechanical difficulties to overcome, not only in carrying on the work itself, but from the lack of material and the working over of this old stuff into new. Such things bring out a man's ingenuity and develop his brain cells. Indeed, I do not know of a better school for an engineer graduate than right here on the Isthmus."

French Hospital Supplies.

Speaking of the old material, quite a lot of it has been used by the sanitary department in one way or another. This is so as to mattresses. The commission found a great lot of old hair bunched up in the basement of the administration building and cleaned. The result was five hundred good hair mattresses, which did not cost over \$4 apiece. They could not have been bought at home for five times that money.

The sanitation officers made a launch, and it would have cost them \$1,000 had one been ordered from the States. They took an old boat at La Boca, and by an expenditure of \$200 fitted out a vessel which does very well. The same department required a float to carry their disinfecting clothing and baggage, similar to the ones used for that purpose at Havana. They took an old bulk with a crane upon it, and it serves the purpose at one-third the cost of a new float.

French Stationery.

Among the other valuable things left by the French is a great amount of stationery. They bought things by the ton, and this was so of fine drawing paper. In the basement of the administration building at Panama lies a carload or so of drawing sheets, each as big as a center table. The draftsmen tell me there is more than can be used for all the drawings that can possibly be made for the canal work, and that the remainder will be worth thousands of dollars.

In the same basement there are printing presses and lithograph presses, all of which have been brought into use by the commission. The canal printers work night and day. They make all the blanks used in the work; they print all the reports, and upon the lithograph presses they are reproducing drawings and plans. There are hundreds of letter presses scattered through the warehouses here, and there are also about six tons of steel pens, so rusty that they are good for nothing. Some of these have been shoveled into the ocean, and the balance of the builders' waste is being sold. It is intended to use for making steel concrete.

French Extravagances.

These six tons of pens give one an idea of the extravagant methods of the

French. During the earlier years of the canal they bought everything in enormous quantities, and the belief is current that the clerks received a commission on their orders. Money flowed like water, and purchases were carelessly made. For instance, at one time a quantity of bolts and screws were needed of a special pattern. A model of wood was made to indicate the shape and the wood was painted black to show that the screws were to be made of iron or steel. In issuing the order, however, no mention was made of the material. It was simply stated that the goods were to be according to sample. A few months later they came on barrels and barrels of bolts and screws made of wood, painted black. They were according to sample, and had to be paid for.

Fifteen Thousand Dollar Pig-Pen

Some of the greatest extravagances were in the buildings. Ordinary cottages stand on costly cement foundations. At the Ancon stables there is a bath tub made for the horses, which is fifteen feet wide, seventy-five feet long and four feet deep. It is arranged that water can be easily let into it. It was the custom of the French engineers to have their racing ponies washed off in this way, instead of carrying them. There were also costly chicken coops, and what I judge is the most costly hog house on record.

Riding up Ancon Hill the other night I discovered it. I had passed the hospital and took a road that led off into the jungle, supposing it would bring me down the hill on the other side. The road was paved and gutted, and Mr. Johnson, who was with me, estimated that it must have cost at least ten thousand dollars a mile to build. We followed it, and its end was a pig pen. And such a pig pen! It was 200 feet long, 100 feet wide and built entirely of concrete, with iron supports upholding a gallery at the top. The pen was divided into compartments, each of which had its cement trough, and it was, all told, large enough to have accommodated 200 hogs at a time. I asked Mr. Johnson what it would cost to build such a structure, and he replied that a low estimate would be \$15,000. Similar extravagances are to be seen everywhere.

New Roads for Panama.

Speaking of roads, the commission is rapidly building them about Ancon Hill. They will construct a highway to the Savannah, a beautiful rolling country south of Panama, and will probably repave the whole of Panama City. The road-making now going on is through an old stone-cruiser, which the supervising architect has erected on the side of Ancon Hill, below the natural quarry. The rocks are rolled down the hill onto a receiving platform, and thence fed into the jaws of the crusher, being distributed by a shaker into the several sizes needed for rock foundations and road work. This crusher was made up out of old material left by the French. The jaws came from one place, the steam engine from another, and the Decauville cars and track from a third. Altogether, they form an excellent machine, which works quite as well as though its parts were all new and freshly imported from the States. (Copyright, 1905, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

REAL ESTATE BOOM.

Many Pieces of Property Change Hands at Front Royal.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) FRONT ROYAL, VA., April 29.—Front Royal is now in the midst of a real estate boom, many sales of importance having been recorded since the first of the year. Among them were: Anderson property on Main Street to Compton & Co., price paid, \$2,100; Methodist Church property to local Masonic Lodge, consideration, \$500; Private building, belonging to Richmond College, sold to Front Royal Milling Co., for \$1,875; Daniel Brannon property on Ship Street, to Samuel Collins, price paid, \$1,000; S. S. Turner law office to Mrs. Henry Turner for \$1,800; Granite & Adams property to Rev. L. Fox, for \$1,300; C. W. Lake property on Manor Avenue to J. B. Compton for \$10,000; (Mrs.) Virginia Jackson property to C. W. Lake for \$2,500; Woodward property on Lee Street, sold to Ed. A. J. Garland, for \$1,200; O'Flaherty and Fulton property on Lee Street to M. J. Fulton; The (Mrs.) Nanette O'Flaherty property on Main Street, to W. W. Weaver & Son, for \$4,000 cash; Heron Co. to B. Compton for \$1,000; Wm. Simpson property on Chester Street, to D. V. Cuddeback property, on Chester Street, to D. V. Cuddeback; Johnson Brothers, consideration \$500. Mr. Charles B. Samuel, of New York, has completed his beautiful new stucco house on Chester Street. Compton & Co., are putting up a large business and dwelling house on the corner of Lee and Main streets, the Anderson mill. Work began on the \$10,000 Methodist Church this week. The old Methodist Church, which was bought by the Masons, will be remodeled and the first floor will be converted into a store room, the second floor into an opera house, and the third floor will be used for a Masonic Temple.

IN LUNENBURG.

A Bright Prospect for the Tidewater Railroad.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) MEHERRIN, VA., April 29.—The wheat crop through this section is far in excess of what was expected a few months ago.

The Lunenburg Lumber Company has started upon a new scheme to supply their mills with labor. Sixty foreigners have been engaged from New York, to come here and work, and other parties are arriving almost every day to work for this company. They make good workers. A large portion of these employees from this vicinity are leaving the mills since the weather has opened up to go upon their farms and their places are being more than filled by labor from other sections.

The greater portion of fruit is not killed through this section as was at first thought. A corp of engineers with the Tidewater Railway Company have been stationed here for the past two weeks straightening out the lines that were formerly run by this company. From what can be learned from the division engineer, who is well up on both this and the Mecklenburg route, there seem no doubt that this line will be taken. According to an estimate given out several days ago it will cost this company very near one half million dollars less to complete this one half million dollar line through Mecklenburg county and this is also two miles shorter. This route is the center of the county and open up one of the best farming sections in Southside Virginia.

COLUMBIA, VA.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) COLUMBIA, VA., April 29.—The young people of Columbia are truly delighted to have the Bowles, teacher of the public schools at this place, for the hospitalities shown them at the entertainment given by her Monday night, in honor of her pupils. Innocent amusements were indulged in until a late hour, after which refreshments were served. Expensive music was furnished by the Columbian String Band. Miss Maude B. Shepherd and Miss Ella G. Coward are visiting friends in Richmond this week. They are also contemplating a trip to Washington, D. C., before their return home. Miss Louie Hodgson, of Richmond, visiting her aunt, Mrs. Stephen B. Hughes.

Charles City Notes.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) MALVERN HILL, VA., April 29.—Miss Emily Guy, of Henric, is spending a short time with Miss Lavina Carter. Mr. John Archer, of Richmond, has been visiting in Charles City. Miss Mary Randolph Carter, of High Hill, is with her aunt, Mrs. Robert Carter, of Shirley on the James. Miss Mary Randolph Carter, of High Hill, is visiting her aunt, the Misses Nelson, of Petersburg. Miss Nellie Braxton, of Richmond, and Miss Virginia Ruffin, of Prince George, will spend several weeks with Mrs. M. N. Carter, of Shirley Mills. Mr. Hugh Harrison, of "Riverdale," is spending a few days at Mr. John Ruffin's. Mrs. G. M. Walker, of the "Glens," has returned from Norfolk, where she has spent several weeks.

Mecklenburg Mites.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) BOYDTON, VA., April 29.—Mecklenburg has as good banking facilities as any county in the State. There is no less than eleven banks in operation at this time. Borden has two: Chase City, three: Clarksville, two: South Hill, two: and in total, all appear to be doing a good business. A temperance wave seems to be rolling over Mecklenburg and the rum and being drawn more lightly over the whiskey trade. Every distillery, except one, has been closed up by the court, and at this one, no less than a gallon of whiskey can be sold. Boydton, where there is a distillery run by the town, is the only place in the county where a man can buy liquor by the small quantity.

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SURRIES, open and with top,

ENGLISH CARTS, very new and stylish,

Business Buggies of every description.

We know we can please you, and you are cordially invited to inspect this stock of vehicles.

POEMS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

Whatever your occupation may be, and however crowded your hours with affairs, do not fail to secure at least a few minutes every day for refreshment of your inner life with a bit of poetry.—Professor Charles Eliot Norton.

No. 483.

TENNYSON.

By HUXLEY.

(Westminster Abbey; Oct. 12, 1852.)
Otho Dissen Totten Mir Teraus!
(The minister speaks.)
Thomas Henry Huxley was born in Ealing, England, in 1825; died at Eastbourne, England, in 1895. By profession he was a surgeon. He was one of the greatest biologists of his own or any other period. He was also the leading exposé of the theories of Darwin. He was an agnostic, and requested that the following lines, composed by his wife, should be carved on his tombstone:
And if there be no meeting past the grave,
If all is darkness, silence, yet let rest
Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep,
For God still giveth His beloved sleep.
And if an endless sleep He wills—so best!
The German quotation is from Schiller's "Don Carlos." The minister, that is the church or abbey, is supposed to exclaim: "Give me my dead."
In the present poem Prof. Huxley imagines Westminster Abbey exclaiming at Tennyson's funeral "Bring me my dead!"



RING me my dead!
To me that have grown,
Stone laid upon stone,
As the stormy brood
Of English blood
Has waxed and spread
And filled the world,
With sails unfurled;
With men that may not lie;
With thoughts that cannot die.

Bring me my dead!
Into the storied hall,
Where I have garnered all
My harvest without weed;
My chosen fruits of goodly seed,
And lay him gently down among
The men of state, the men of song;
The men that would not suffer wrong;
The thought-worn chieftains of the mind;
Head servants of the human kind.

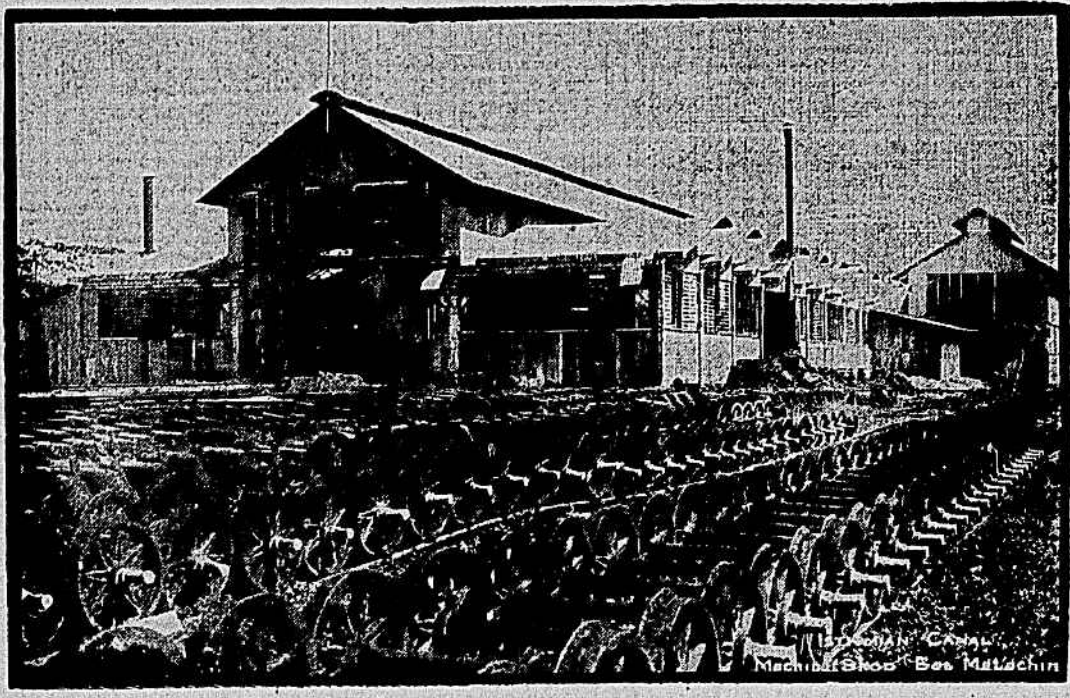
Bring me my dead!
The autumn sun shall shed
Its beams athwart the bier's
Heaped blooms; a many tears
Shall flow; his words, in cadence sweet and strong,
Shall voice the full hearts of the silent throng.
Bring me my dead!

And oh! sad wedded mourner, seeking still
For vanished handclasp; drinking in thy fill
Of holy grief; forgive, that pious theft
Robs thee of all, save memories, left;
Not thine to kneel beside the grassy mound
While dies the western glow; and all around
Is silence; and the shadows closer creep
And whisper softly: All must fall asleep.



This series began in The Times-Dispatch Sunday, October 11, 1903. One is published each day.

Father John Henry Thien, a Roman Catholic priest, of Wichita, Kas., has been appointed chamberlain of Pope Pius. The "rice carries" with it the honorary title of monsignor.
The Daughters of Captain John Mul-lan, U. S. A., are running a laundry in Washington and are making a success of it. The venture, though some of their partners are very successful.



UNCLE SAM'S BIG SHOP AT BAS MATACHIN.
"Notice French Car Wheels and Dredge Buckets Outside."

work at Culebra. It is where the old French material is being made into new for use on the canal. There are other shops at Colon on the Atlantic and other shops at Culebra itself, where the actual work of excavation is in progress. At Empire there are fully fifteen acres of buildings and storage tracks, and there we have fifty locomotives, several hundred cranes and a vast number of dump cars. At Culebra one hundred mechanics are making light repairs on the 1,000 cars, 30 locomotives, seven excavators and the new steam shovels which are working there. We have a big machine shop at Colon on the Atlantic and some at La Boca on the Pacific. We have a saw and planing mill running at Colon, making the lumber for the new buildings and repairs, and there are smiths and blacksmith shops for the same purpose. Indeed, the man who thinks nothing is being done on the Isthmus has but to see these shops to learn his mistake.

A Talk With Engineer Strom.

I am here at Bas Matachin with Mr. Carl A. Strom, the mechanical engineer of the commission. He has charge of all the machinery of the Isthmus, and it is his duty to keep it in repair. The commission has told him to get what he can out of the French supplies, and he is doing this with a corps of mechanical engineers, American foremen and a large number of native laborers. Mr. Strom is one of the strenuous young men of Uncle Sam's corps. He is about six feet in height, broad-shouldered and muscular, and he looks as though he could defy malaria, yellow fever or any kind of hard work. He is a Swede by birth and was educated at the Royal Poly-

technic Institute of Stockholm, one of the best engineering schools of the world. After his graduation there he came to the United States and learned the English language while acting as engineer for the Chesapeake and Ohio and Southwestern Railway. When that road was merged in the Illinois Central he went with it, and soon became the mechanical engineer in chief of that system, with its enormous shops and 5,000 or 6,000 miles of track.

"We had a gang of machete men cut down the jungle and clear out the vegetation about the buildings. It took us almost three weeks to do this and get the machines in running order. We then began to organize our force, and we now have a repair shop that I would not be ashamed to show to the mechanical engineer of any American railroad."

"I asked: 'Almost everything in the line of repairing' was the reply. 'We have 300 men at work making general repairs upon all kinds of other machinery used in the canal work. Our capacity just now is seven locomotives and 110 cars per month. We have already repaired about 1,000 of the old French dump cars, and they are now in service at Culebra. Most of them were badly broken and rusted out. We renewed the timbers and replaced the missing parts. We repaired a number of locomotives, and now have between thirty and forty of them in use, and we have

additional tools from the States we shall have machine shops inferior to none. Take the French locomotives. Those which we are now repairing are of Belgian make. They are well designed and of superior workmanship, but they are complicated and in some ways hard to maintain. We can use them, however, and are repairing them for Culebra and other points."

"We are also repairing the old French excavators, which, by an endless chain of buckets, scoop up the earth and load it on the cars. These are now in use, and Chief Engineer Wallace will probably continue to use them until he has enough steam shovels or other superior American machinery to take their places. Just now when our machinery has not come from the States much of this old French stuff can be used."

"Indeed, it is hard to estimate the value of the material which we got with the canal. The equipment of the shops here is, I judge, worth at least a quarter of a million dollars."

"How about your labor, Mr. Strom?" "We have American foremen, with native under them. We have some Jamaican negroes, who are skilled mechanics, and who are especially good blacksmiths. We have one blacksmith whom I will put up against any white blacksmith anywhere. The majority of the Jamaicans, however, are worthless as far as skilled labor is concerned. We can use them for rough work only."

"What other races do you employ?" "We have a number of Spaniards, some of whom are superior to the mechanics from the States. We have some Frenchmen and a large number of Colombians. We have a Spanish locomotive gang, a French gang and an American gang. We work them side by side, and each tries to see whether it cannot do the most work. So far the French play second fiddle to none."

"Are your men interested in their work?" "The Spaniards and French are much interested."

"How about the Jamaicans?" "We have to drive them all the time. They have no energy and no individuality. They drag along waiting for the whistle to blow."

Americans in Panama.

"What is the character of your American labor?"

"We have about the same class of workmen here that you find in the States, and use them chiefly for foremen. We pay them 45 cents gold an hour, and in addition furnish them from quarters. This is about 25 per cent more than they receive in the States. We pay the common laborer from 15 to 40 cents an hour, in silver, which is equal to from 7 1/2 to 20 cents an hour gold. The Jamaican mechanics get more."

"Americans work here in the tropics?"

"I think so, especially under cover, as in the shops. Bas Matachin is high and healthy. We have but little sickness, and have had almost no malaria since the vegetation was cleared away. We want the very best American mechanics we can get, and I think they will eventually be satisfied with their pay and with their accommodations."

"What kind of men have you in your

SCROFULA A Disease We Inherit

The tainted blood of ancestors lays upon the shoulders of innocent offspring untold suffering by transmitting to them, through the blood, that blighting disease, Scrofula; for in nearly every instance the disease can be traced to some family blood trouble, or blood-kin marriage which is contrary to the laws of nature. Swelling, ulcerating glands of the neck, catarrh, weak eyes, sores, abscesses, skin eruptions, white swelling, hip disease and other deformities, with a wasting of the natural strength and vitality, are some of the ways this miserable disease manifests itself. The poison transmitted through the blood pollutes and weakens that health-sustaining fluid and in place of its nutritive qualities fills the circulation with scrofulous matter and tubercular deposits, often resulting in consumption. A disease which has been in the family blood for generations, perhaps, or at least since the birth of the sufferer, requires constitutional treatment. S. S. S. is the remedy best fitted for this. It cleanses the blood of all scrofulous and tubercular poisons, makes it rich and pure and under the tonic effects of this great blood medicine the general health improves, the symptoms all pass away, there is a sure return to health, the disease is cured permanently while posterity is protected. Book on the blood and any advice wished, furnished by our physicians, without charge.

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